In Touch South India

Headlines from the U.S. Consulate General Chennai

Get in Touch

Main Web link:

http://chennai.usconsulate.gov

Other links:

http://americanlibrary.in.library.net
http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov
http//www.useap.org
http://buyusa.gov/india

Consulate Phone Number:

044-2811-2000

Consulate Fax Number:

044-2811-2020

Did you Know?

- On an average workday the U.S. Consulate General in Chennai issues visas to enough people to fill two 747 aircraft.

- U.S. Commercial Services has offices in Bangalore and Hyderabad other than Chennai

- AIRC Displays Book Exhibits on different topics each month at the Consulate

Days to Remember

July 4th American Independence day.

Last Friday of each month, web chat with Consular Officer. www.sify.com

Every Wednesday, *Open House* on Higher Education in the U.S.

Greetings!

This bulletin summarizes the programs and services the American Consulate offers in South India. We anticipate continued change and growth, both within the Consulate and throughout the vibrant states of South India. To keep abreast of that change, we will periodically send updates of this newsletter with contact information and descriptions of our activities. Please take a look. I think you will find we have much to offer.

Richard D. Haynes
Consul General of the United States

The Public Affairs Section (PAS)

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) conducts information and cultural programs in collaboration with important institutions in South India. The three components of PAS are American Information Resource Center (AIRC), Programs, and the Press. All the three sections deliver information about the United States, its government and policies, American institutions and people, and American culture. Through seminars, exhibits, musical concerts, speaker programs, extensive interaction with people from all walks of life, and exchange programs for sending young Indian leaders on acquaintance tours to the U.S. ; PAS facilitates sharing of ideas and concerns between Indians and Americans on a wide variety of topics. Several American academics, writers, strategic experts and other public figures visit India every year on speaker programs. They engage diverse audiences in different parts of India, meet with their Indian counterparts and share ideas. The topics covered in speaker programs include American history, literature, culture, politics, economics, education, U.S. foreign policy and U.S. national and international security strategies.

Every year, the U.S. Embassy sends 80+ upcoming Indian leaders from various fields to participate in a 3-week International Visitor (IV) Program in the United States, which is tailored to their areas of work and research. The candidates for this program must have demonstrated academic and professional excellence in their areas of specialty to be considered for this program. The Embassy receives from 150 to 200 nominations from all sections of the U.S. mission in India. A committee of senior American officers selects 80 of the top nominees to participate in the IV program. The Fulbright American Studies Institute is the other major exchange program offered by the Embassy. PAS is currently working on an extensive English language-teaching program for underprivileged students in three Chennai schools.

The press section is the main link between the Consulate and the South Indian media. It facilitates interview requests from South Indian media with Consulate officials and visiting dignitaries. The press section maintains a close liaison with Indian media organizations and journalists. In addition, it selects transcripts of U.S. officials' speeches, articles and commentaries from U.S. print and electronic press for distribution to interested Indian media. For further information visit: www.chennai.usconsulate.gov

American Facts.......

☆   The first American Flag was sewn by Betsy Ross in its traditional red, white and blue colors.

☆   The famous crack in the Liberty Bell rendered the bell unringable in 1846.

☆   The American Bald Eagle has been a national symbol of the United States since 1782.

☆   Geographically, the United States is the world's third largest country after Russia and Canada.

☆   The 13 stripes on the U.S. flag represent the original colonies - the 50 stars represent the 50 states.

☆   The National Anthem of the United States is *The Star-Spangled Banner*

American Information Resource Center

The American Information Resource Center (AIRC) provides current information about the U.S. government and its policies, American values, history, culture, and institutions. You can enroll as an individual or institutional member of the AIRC. As member, you can borrow books and make use of the Print and Electronic Resources and the Internet for your informational needs in the areas of economics, democracy, environment, human rights, open markets and related topics, view videotapes, use reference services in person, mail, telephone, fax or email, and use the facility to borrow books and reference services.

AIRC conducts orientation programs on effective use of its resources. AIRC also organizes road shows, electronic conferences, and thematic book and video discussions

In addition, AIRC provides informational support for conferences and seminars organized by local institutions. AIRC is open from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

The All India Catalog can be found at http://americanlibrary.in.library.net.

To contact AIRC, please call 044-2811-2000, fax 044-2811-2053, or email chennairefdesk@state.gov

In Memory

Ronald Wilson Reagan played many roles in his life. He was the 40th President of United States of America as well as a governor, actor, father and husband. Between 1937 and 1966, Reagan appeared in 50 films and was President of the Screen Actor's Guild. He served as a Captain during World War II in army film studios. He served as the state of California's Governor from 1966 to 1975. He furthered Indo-U.S. relations and cooperation during his terms in the White House from 1980-1989.

As a little boy Reagan's father nicknamed him "Dutch" and as an adult he was often called "The Gipper," after his character George Gipp in the film "Knute Rockne: All American." Reagan married his wife Nancy four years after divorcing actress Jane Wyman, with whom he had a daughter and adopted a son. Ronald and Nancy Reagan had a son and a daughter.

http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/resource/handout/Rrfilms.htm.

New at AIRC

Agenda for the Nation. By Henry J. Aaron, James M. Lindsay, and Pietro S. Nivola. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003 (320.6 AGE)

Human Rights: Concepts, Contests, Contingencies Edited by Austin Sarat and Thomas R. Kearns. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004 (323 HUM)

The Change Makers: From Carnegie to Gates: How the Great Entrepreneurs Transformed Ideas into Industries. By Maury Klein. New York, NY: Times Books, 2003 (338.04 KLE)

Framing Terrorism: the News Media, the Government and the Public. Edited by Pippa Norris, Montague Kern and Marion Just. New York, NY: Routledge, 2003 (303.625FRA)

"Hispanic Challenges." By Samuel P. Huntington, *Foreign Policy,* March/April 2004, pp. 30-45.

"Peter Drucker Sets Us Straight." by Peter Drucker, Marc Schlender, & Brent Bschlender, *Fortune,* January 12, 2004, pp. 115-119.

"Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is It Worth the Effort?" by Renee A. Irvin and John Stansbury. *Public Administration Review,* January/February, 2004 pp.55-65.

"Don't Cry for Cancun," by Jagdish Bhagwati. *Foreign Affairs,* January/February, 2004, pp. 52-63.

American Citizen Services (ACS)

The American Citizen Services Unit provides a myriad of services to the American citizen population in southern India over and above passport issuances and renewals, reports of birth, American Citizen registrations, and the dissemination of important security information. For the big picture, one must hit the streets of South India. There you will see a father who has come to Chennai to take home his two children who were abducted from their home in Utah; a man in Bangalore reunited with his brother who had been missing for several months; a man whose confiscated office equipment was returned to him in Mumbai; a man in Hyderabad taking delivery of medication from Chennai that wasn't available in Hyderabad. Chennai ACS is in every one of those pictures and in countless others.

What you will see most often these days, however, are the smiling faces of registered voters. The registration drive is on! You don't know how to register? You haven't lived in the U.S. for 30 years? You don't know where to go for information on the candidates and issues? That's okay, we can help.

The U.S. Presidential election in 2000 was extremely close - a difference of 537 votes in Florida decided the outcome of the election. Americans, and especially Americans abroad, became much more aware after the 2000 election that absentee ballots counted and could make a difference. The U.S. Congress, the media, and the American public will be watching absentee voting closely. Consular Officers at U.S. Embassies and Consulates around the world who serve as Voting Assistance Officers are helping American citizens overseas to register and vote by absentee ballot.

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) requires that U.S. states and territories allow U.S. service members, their family members of voting age, and U.S. citizens residing outside the U.S. to register and vote by absentee ballot in elections for federal offices.

✗ *The Basic Absentee Voting Process*

Fill out a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to request registration and/or an absentee ballot. The form is available on-line or from a U.S. Embassy, Consulate or American civic group. Mail it to a local election official (LEO) in your county/state of voting residence in the U.S.

The LEO reviews it and, if all is in order, approves it.

The LEO sends out a ballot 30-45 days before the election.

The overseas voter completes the absentee ballot and mails it back to meet the state ballot receipt deadline.

Many states allow faxing of the FPCA; some allow faxing of the blank ballot; fewer allow faxing of the voted ballot.

There is an emergency ballot, the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot

(FWAB), available at the Embassy if the voter requests, but fails to receive, an absentee ballot in time.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program's website at http://www.fvap.gov contains a wealth of useful information on U.S. absentee voting.

For more information on voting and other services, please contact American Citizen Services at 044-2811-2025 or visit the Consulate's website at http://chennai.usconsulate.gov

Visa Section

In addition to assisting American Citizens, the Consular Section also processes applications for immigrant and non-immigrant visas. Immigrant visas are for persons who plan to live, work or study and remain permanently in the U.S. Non-immigrant visas (NIV) are for temporary visits to the U.S. Which type of NIV you'll need-and the requirements to apply for that visa-depends largely on your purpose of travel, such as tourism, study or work. For comprehensive information on U.S. visa policy, please visit http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov.

The visa unit in Chennai is the fastest growing U.S. visa operation in the world. Responding to increasing workload, over the last four years the State Department has doubled the number of consular officers and staff working in Chennai. The section grew from six consular officers in 2000 to 13 consular officers today and expects to have a total of 20 consular officers within the next year. The number of locally employed staff is growing as well and the Consular Section is almost always looking for new employees. Vacant positions are announced under the "Human Resources" of the Consulate's website. The Consular Section is also growing physically. Construction is just about finished on a project to expand visa operations into the Consulate's inner courtyard. This will be the eighth physical expansion of the Consular Section's work area since 1988. This construction current project will create five new interview windows, enabling the Consulate to process even more visa applications every day.

For additional information on the procedures for making a visa application in Chennai, please visit the Consulate website: http://chennai.usconsulate.gov

HHS-CDC-GAP

The Global AIDS Program (GAP) of the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) in India, under the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), was formally established in October 2001.

Present activities focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support. Offices are located at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi and the U.S. Consulate in Chennai.

The three GAP, India program areas are building capacity for HIV prevention and care; strengthening infrastructure for training; and providing technical assistance to national and state AIDS control programs.

GAP has several activities in progress, directly or through partnerships with other agencies and NGOs. An advisory committee meets on a routine basis to monitor and guide the progress of GAP programs within the state of Tamil Nadu. At the Government Hospital of Thoracic Medicine (GHTM) information systems were developed by GAP in collaboration with Satyam Computer Services Ltd a

Dr.Rajasekaran,Deputy Superintendent of the Government Hospital of Thoracic Medicine, Chennai explains the CDC, GAP activites at the hospital to the Congressional Staff Delegation from Washington, D.C.

global leader in software technology. A temporary lab was established and laboratoryrenovation is expected to be complete in August 2004. The curriculum is under review and revised; long term intensive support for the training program is under way.

For more information, email Dr Dora Warren, Country Director GAP, India, WarrenD@indcdc.org.in

United States Asia Environmental Partnership

United States Asia Environmental Partnership (U.S.-AEP) is a program of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that promotes clean and efficient industries in Asia. US-AEP cooperates with several stakeholders to carry out its field driven programs and respond to the needs of South India.

US-AEP promotes recycling and reuse of water for non-potable applications to improve water availability in the region. Other projects include feasibility studies on wastewater recycling and demonstrations of "Deep integrated pond system" and "Reciprocating wastewater technology." US-AEP has spent close to $1,000,000 on these projects and beneficiaries include the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Hyderabad Metropolitan Water supply and Sewerage Board, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University and Loyola College. In addition, US-AEP is working on municipal and hazardous waste products.

US-AEP is collaborating with Ramky to implement the Municipal and Hazardous Waste Treatment and Disposal Project in Bangalore, Haldia and Chennai. US-AEP has partnered with the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad to close their existing dumpsite and design an engineered landfill; this project is sponsored by a $25,000 US-AEP grant and an equal cost share with the project stakeholders. In addition to these two programs, US-AEP is supporting the establishment of a Fuel Testing Facility in Chennai with a $150,000 grant with an equal cost share by project stakeholders.

For more information please call 044-2811-2039, or visit http://www.usaep.org

People to People

The wonderful people, music and spices in India impress me a great deal. There is such diversity and a variety of things happening all of the time. The wide range of cultures and languages in South India surprises me, and someday I hope to visit all of the Southern states.
.   ...Abby
U.S. citizen visiting India

Very impressed with the openness and individualism in American Society. Amazed to watch large diversity and multi-culturalism and tall buildings, huge university campuses, well-planned roads and rail systems, several cars and bridges. The only difference I found between my two visits in 1997 and 2003 is that there is no WTC.
...Krishna
Indian citizen visiting U.S.

United States Educational Foundation in India

The United States Educational Foundation in India (USEFI) aims to build bridges and promote dialogue between citizens of India and the United States. USEFI administers the Fulbright program of educational and cultural exchange, facilitates dialogue between Fulbright scholars and their communities and is a source of information for U.S. higher education.

Each year, American and Indian scholars visit each other's country under the auspices of the Fulbright program. The fellowships available to Indian scholars emphasize research both at the doctoral and post-doctoral levels, and professional training in newly emerging areas of importance to India. 32 American scholars visited South India and 19 scholars from South India visited the United States in 2002-03.

USEFI organizes seminars, symposiums, workshops, round tables, concerts, performances and other activities that encourage dialogue and exchange. Previous programs include a Fulbright memorial lecture on positive discrimination and affirmative action; an international round table on health and environmental issues in tanneries and textile industries; and an alternate dispute resolution workshop.

USEFI provides educational advising services, a reference library, group and individual advising sessions, administers standardized tests and organizes and participates in U.S. university fairs. Separate group advising sessions provide information on application procedures to U.S. universities, student visas, pre-departure planning and specific fields of study. USEFI Chennai offered educational advising services on higher education in the United States to nearly 56,000 students in 2002-03. June to September is a busy time for students so our activities feature discussions on student visas, interaction with U.S. university representatives, pre-departure orientation sessions and guidance on the application process for next year. During this busy season, USEFI holds Fulbright program mentoring workshops for potential applicants, answers questions, compiles applications, organizes selections and interacts with the applicants.

To know more about the Fulbright program, the fellowships available for Indian scholars or studying in the United States, visit USEFI at www.fulbright-india.org, http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/wwwhusef.html, write to us at usefimas@md2.vsnl.net.in, or call us at 044-2811-2049.

U.S. Commercial Services (USCS)

The U.S. Commercial Services (USCS), South India has offices in Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. The large economies of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh occupy top positions in India's industrialized states.
USCS has a front row seat to the economic and political revolution in South India and it continuously broadcasts this news to both U.S. public and private sectors. South Indian industries offer numerous products including automobiles, automotive components, textiles, information technology, leather, chemicals and financial services in Tamil Nadu; information technology, food processing, biotechnology and agricultural equipment, precision engineering, aeronautical engineering and telecommunication in Karnataka; and precision engineering, heavy engineering, agriculture, information technology, pharmaceutical and biotechnology in Andhra Pradesh.

Major U.S. companies like Caterpillar, Cisco, Sun Microsystems, Hewlett Packard, IBM, General Electric, Metlife, Motorola, Texas Instruments, Ford, Visteon, Chevron, TRW, Cognizant Technology, Computer Associates, Microsoft, Dell and Oracle all have a strong presence in South India.

Celebrating PL-480

U.S. Economic assitance to India began in 1951 when the United States extended its first loan to India for the purchace of 2 millions tons of wheat to alleviate the food crisis. In 1956, India and the United States signed the first PL-480 agreement valued at $360 million, enabling India to buy needed agricultural commodities in exchange for rupee payments--80 percent of which were used to fund joint develepoment programs. Food from the fields of American farmers and valued at $7.84 billion has been provided to India during the past 50 years. On average, India now receives about 2000,000 Metric Tons of PL480 food commodities a year valued at $90 million.

USCS assists U.S. exporters in introducing their products and technologies to overseas markets. USCS also helps American companies find suitable business partners in India.

The offices in Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad maintain a Business Information Center (BIC), which is the first point of contact for Indian businesses wanting to source products and technologies from the U.S. These offices attract many Indian business visitors.

USCS works closely on projects, advocacy for U.S. firms and reporting with other U.S. Government agencies. USCS partners with industry multipliers and trade chambers to foster an already strong Indo-U.S. commercial relationship. It also organizes and participates in major trade events to promote U.S. products and technologies, and recruits buyer delegations to leading U.S. trade fairs and regional trade shows with large U.S. pavilions.

Please visit our official web site http://buyusa.gov/india to see the full range of services offered by USCS.

U.S.-India Space Conference

The U.S. and India held a major conference June 21-25 in Bangalore highlighting the NASA-ISRO relationship that began 40 years ago. This conference, "The India - United States Conference on Space Science, Applications and Commerce," represents the single largest activity sponsored by the Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum.

The Conference brought together hundreds of leading U.S. and Indian commercial, scientific and government representatives to celebrate past accomplishments and exchange views on how to move the relationship forward.

The January 11 2004 announcement of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership in India by President George W. Bush's and the Bangalore Space Conference are major steps that give life to the vision of a transforming relationship between the U.S. and India. http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/wwwhspaceconf.html